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STUDENTS' MARCH BRINGS CRACKDOWN BY SOUTH KOREANS

FIERCE CLASH ON CAMPUS

60,000 Policemen Called In
to Block Hike to Border
Planned for Today

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Special to The New York Times

SEOUL, South Korea, June 9 — Plans for a border meeting between North and South Korean students are prompting the harshest Government crackdown since President Roh Tae Woo took power in February.

This evening, a brief but fierce battle raged between riot policemen and students at Yonsei University, where at least 10,000 students gathered to prepare for the 30-mile march on Friday to the border village at Panmunjom. Students hurled firebombs and stones at police officers in an effort to break through a cordon thrown up to block the march.

Debate Becomes Divisive

Korean reunification, after 43 years of division, has not only emerged as the central goal of the student protest movement here; it has also become the subject of a divisive, passionate debate that has consumed all of South Korea.

Although the Government is exploring ways to widen contacts with North Korea, it has banned the meeting on Friday as a propaganda exercise; only the Government is allowed to initiate such meetings.

Thousands of police officers sealed off the streets around the university and used rapid-fire tear-gas launchers against the students, some of whom chanted anti-American slogans. While the police managed to hold back most of the students, more than 1,000 of them scaled university walls and battled the police for two and a half hours.

Clashes at 57 Universities

Skirmishes between small bands of students and police officers also broke out across Seoul, Yonhap, the national press agency, reported, clashes at 57 universities nationwide and more than 200 arrests. Police officials expect larger protests on Friday.

At Panmunjom, in the Demilitarized

Zone separating the two Koreas, the South Korean students plan to meet with 13 students from Kim Il Sung University who are being sent by the North Korean Government. They are to discuss plans for a North-South student athletic meet in September to coincide with the Olympic Games in Seoul.

The Government has announced it would send nearly 60,000 police officers to block highways leading to the North and to search rail and bus terminals.

Opposition politicians have asked the students to call off their march, although they have criticized the Government response as too harsh. But these politicians are also demanding a say in setting unification policy.

North and South Korea have been divided since the end of World War II, when the United States, fearing that Soviet troops would occupy the entire peninsula, drew a line at the 38th parallel. The two halves quickly became hostile camps, and the North invaded the South in 1950.

A Longing Runs Deep

The longing to become one country again runs deep here.

"Korean sentiment for reunification is quite a bit stronger here than in Germany," said Lee Hong Koo, the Unification Minister. "We have lived at least 2,000 years as one people. Anything less is considered unnatural."

Some Germans may feel division is the price they had to pay because Germany started and lost the war. But we Koreans feel we don't deserve this."

Yet for years, talk of reunifying invited a stiff jail sentence. But last week, bowing to public opinion and heeding the approach of the Olympics, the Government announced it would open up the debate on unification, release previously censored information on life in the North, and work with opposition parties to draw up new policies to ease tension with the North.

The Government also proposed resuming Cabinet-level talks with North Korea, which were suspended after 115 people were killed in November when a self-avowed North Korean agent planted a bomb on a South Korean airliner. The North has rejected the proposal, insisting that because Mr. Roh's Government won only 37 percent

of the vote in December, all opposition parties should take part in the talks.

For all the tentative steps toward change, North and South remain isolated from one another. Troops are massed on both sides of the border. Except for a small-scale reunion in 1985, families on opposite sides of the Demilitarized Zone may not meet each other. Telephone calls and letters are not permitted, and exchanges of scholars, athletes, students, or journalists have not taken place.

"Up to now, the unification issue was dominated by the Government, and no other ideas were allowed," said Shin Myung Soon, an associate professor of political science at Yonsei University. "What was taught about North Korea was limited and biased: it was a Communist country, totalitarian. That is true, but that is not all. The reality of the North Korean situation is not known in South Korea, and that is not

good for improving relations."

The policy changes in South Korea are not placating students, who accuse the Government of too often using tensions with the North as a pretext for stifling democratic change. The students are pouring energy into a two-pronged movement: to step up contacts with the North and to oust the United States, which they contend supports authoritarian governments and remains the greatest barrier to reunification. Three students have committed suicide in the last month to show their dedication to the cause.

"Our ultimate goal is not just blind unification, but achieving sovereignty under an independent regime," said a student leader at Yonsei University. "We have realized we can't have true democracy with a regime represented by military force and manipulated by a foreign invasive force — the United States."